

26. ~~The method defined in Claim 11 wherein said step (d) is performed by providing a box and by connecting the box directly to the integrally formed mounting structures of the first and second side rails.~~

27. ~~The method defined in Claim 11 wherein said step (d) is performed by providing a bumper assembly and by connecting the bumper assembly directly to the integrally formed mounting structures of the first and second side rails.~~

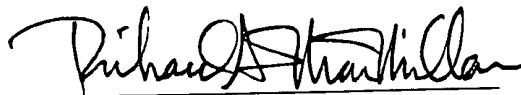
REMARKS

The courtesy of the Examiner in granting the undersigned attorney a personal interview on April 11, 2000 is gratefully acknowledged. During that interview, the above amendments to Claim 1 were discussed in light of the Jacobs et al. and Shah et al. references. As noted on the Examiner Interview Summary Record, it was agreed that such amendments would distinguish the invention over such prior art, subject to further search and consideration.

Claims 2 through 10, and new Claims 16 through 21, depend from Claim 1 and, therefore, are also patentable. Independent Claim 11 has been amended in the same manner as Claim 1 and, therefore, distinguishes the invention over such prior art, subject to further search and consideration. Claims 12 through 15, and new Claims 22 through 27, depend from Claim 11 and, therefore, are also patentable.

In view of the amendments, it is believed that the application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, an early Notice Of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



Richard S. MacMillan
Reg. No. 30,085

MacMillan, Sobanski & Todd, LLC
One Maritime Plaza, Fourth Floor
720 Water Street
Toledo, Ohio 43604
(419) 255-5900